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Carla Wenckebach, Pioneer. By MARGARETHE MÜLLER. Boston and London: Ginn & Co., 1908. Pp. 290. Illustrated. \$1.25.

Wellesley historical material has made great gains this year in the *Life of Alice Freeman Palmer*, her published addresses in the volume entitled *The Teacher*, and now in the life of the extraordinary woman who was Mrs. Palmer's intimate friend and for many years the head of the German department in the college. Fräulein Wenckebach's characteristic signature on the outside of the volumes she has edited as *Der Trompeter von Säckingen* together with the excellent introductions she has written have been the most common means of affording any acquaintance with her.

The biographer states that her reasons for writing have been her "desire to share a precious possession" and "to furnish an historic document of a life which . . . represents a type of seemingly increasing prominence—that of the woman in whose mental make-up sex does not appear to be of prime and decisive importance . . . one who marries if the man comes her way, but otherwise 'hunts' congenial activity in preference to man or motherhood."

The book makes a number of interesting contributions to the literature of childhood and adolescence. We get glimpses of the sturdy little Frisian maiden with her unusual disabilities in living up to the German ideal of girlhood. She would not learn to sew, domineered over other children, was adored by the servants, especially the men with whom she smoked her little pipe, which had its place with the others on the rack in the servant's kitchen. She played marbles for keeps—was a thoroughgoing tom-boy. At seventeen we find her rising at four in Hannover, and, in order to secure the seat she wished in the seminar lecture-room, is "boosted" by a friend over a ten-foot wall and so gains first admittance for her group of friends. This independence is representative of her actions through life. As a governess in Scotland, in the Caucasus, in New York, she must have been always a striking figure and sometimes a difficult person to understand and to get along with.

It does not seem that the life we have described up to her thirtieth year was the *propaedeutic* one would expect for life in the inner circle at Wellesley. Yet it seems to have served that purpose well and one's respect for that peculiar institution, the Wellesley of early days, is increased by the fact that this positive character was not only accepted but highly valued there.

The life for a time in Russia is helpful in giving so clear an account of social conditions in the frontier toward the Orient. Some elements of barbarism mingle with the later developments of Rousseau's doctrines and work themselves out in an artificial social life in which the children are the greatest sufferers. A less primitive and active nature than that of the German governess would not have seen so much meaning in so complicated a situation. One wishes that sometime further extracts from the journals and even the often-mentioned novel dealing with this eastern experience may be published.

There is less than is desired in this sketch that will help the reader to understand clearly Miss Wenckebach's impressions of the difference between German and other education. She shares the feeling found in most Germans and many others in any country outside of France that, however bad educational conditions may be in Germany, they are better there than anywhere else and that

this excellence is due to "German thoroughness." One would get the impression that the girls' school in Hildesheim gave a training in which superficiality had no possible part. I have seen in more recent years in other girls' schools in Germany conditions of superficial work in the natural sciences, for instance, which seemed to me alarming in the case of the American girls who happened to be studying in them and who expected later to take the examinations for entrance into an American college. I know no high school of first or second grade in this country which would come so near the ideals of the old-fashioned "finishing school" as did the ones I have in mind. In the *Fräulein's* criticisms of America, written from New York in 1880, she says, "If you want to find good teachers or people who have actually acquired a scholarly training in this country you have to hunt them out with a lantern. The lack of exact knowledge is a great flaw in the intellectual make-up of a nation that in all other respects is so splendidly progressive." This adverse criticism had more of truth in it thirty years ago than it has today yet it reminds me of the remark of an English friend who told me that his book for teachers of Greek had been declined by an American publisher because the American teacher of Greek had not sufficient scholarship to use it. That was hard after having seen some of the Greek teaching that had come in my way in England. The difficulty is that these comparisons usually take one stratum in one country and another in the other. As a sidelight on the omniscience felt by the German after a preparation in "thoroughness" we find Carla Wenckebach in New York stopping her literary work and taking up a "scientific study of astronomy, geology, philology, and other 'ologies and 'onomies" in order to write a textbook for children. It was a German teacher of high training and family connections who offered in the same city to teach for me on a moment's notice an unknown class in any subject in any grade!

The book is very well written. It will be valuable in high school, normal school, and college as well as in private libraries.

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Life Questions of High-School Boys. By JEREMIAH W. JENKS. New York: Young Men's Christian Association Press, 1908. Pp. 143.

No writer in economics and politics has furnished so much material of use in school problems as has Professor Jenks. So when a book dealing with the life questions of high-school boys is written by him we turn to it with the hope that it will prove a valuable tool in meeting the serious needs of secondary education.

There are chapters on the relation of high-school to life; custom, habit; societies, cliques, fraternities; intoxicating liquors and tobacco; profanity and slang; cheating and graft; gambling and betting; the sex problem; religion, etc. Each chapter is prefaced by a number of quotations principally from Emerson and the Bible. There are also suggested readings outlined from Emerson, Bacon, the Bible, William Mathews, Samuel Smiles, and Lowell.

A reading of the book resulted in considerable disappointment. A skilful